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SUBJECT: EASTERN DRC NOTES - JUNE 29

¶1. (U) The information contained in this cable consists principally of spot reports from various sources. This cable is not exhaustive, nor can all the information contained therein be confirmed at this time.

Anti-LRA Operations

¶2. (SBU) A UPDF liaison to MONUC reported that LRA forces are moving west in the far north, possibly heading towards the CAR. The UPDF has established bases at Duru and Swahili (where the UPDF initially attacked the main LRA group in December 2008). MONUC indicated that the UPDF may also be present at Doruma.

¶3. (SBU) According to a MONUC DDRRR report, UPDF/FARDC forces have killed a number of high ranking LRA officers in the past few weeks, surging their forces around Faradje in an attempt to apprehend or kill an LRA commander, Charles Arop. The number of LRA attacks in the area has decreased significantly because of the surge. As pressure mounts in the east, the LRA, including senior leadership, appear to be moving into Bas Uele and towards the CAR.

Security Situation in Ituri

¶4. (SBU) Despite extensive FARDC and MONUC actions under the Iron Stone Operation, Ituri remains insecure. An estimated 40 militia, probably FRPI, attacked the town of Ganga on June 23. A 17-year old FRPI defector told MONUC that there are approximately 50 child soldiers with the rebels. Most want to surrender, but they apparently fear FARDC reprisals.

Security Situation in North Kivu

¶5. (U) On June 27, FDLR forces attacked the village of Kiseguru, 90 kilometers northeast of Goma, killing two FARDC, injuring one FARDC and one civilian, looting the village, and burning down 35 houses. According to local residents, the attackers were "numerous." The population in the area remains tense, as many of them are recently returned IDPs. A MONUC patrol responded to the attack.

¶6. (SBU) FARDC troops clashed with FDLR elements on June 23 near Kamandi on the shore of Lake Edward, with 7 FDLR killed. According to MONUC, there are significant numbers of FDLR in the area, where reprisals against locals have resulted in large population displacements.

Security Situation in South Kivu

¶7. (SBU) A FARDC and FDLR soldier were killed in a clash in Kalehe in South Kivu. Separately, five FDLR troops were reportedly killed near Walungu. Reports of FARDC human rights violations in South

Kivu persist, while the FDLR continues to terrorize communities near Bunyakiri. FARDC troops deployed to Shabunda have reportedly encountered very few FDLR troops in the far western part of South Kivu.

Integration

¶18. (SBU) The pace of integration in South Kivu has picked up slightly, with 1,692 militia members having reported to integration centers. Only 232 weapons have been turned in. DDRRR noted that it continues to receive ex-CNDP combatants who want to repatriate, rather than to remain unpaid within the ranks of the FARDC.

¶19. (SBU) A DDRRR report pointed out that "integrated" members of ex-armed groups continue to defect from the FARDC, upset at non-payment of salaries. Insecurity is high in Lubero, Kanyabayonga, Kirumba, Shabunda, and around Mwenga due to possible revival of old alliances between FDLR, PARECO, and APCLS. DDRRR claimed that the FDLR had established a weapons supply route from Tanzania. DDRRR indicated that the ex-CNDP leadership operates in an opaque manner, with parallel chains of command within the FARDC.

Tutsi-Hutu Reconciliation

¶10. (SBU) Members of PARECO-Hutu recently told us that they had formed an organization, the Farmers and Herders Cooperative (Cooperation Agriculteurs et Eleveurs-CAE), to strengthen the economic and political situation of their bases: ex-members of CNDP and PARECO-Hutu; and Tutsi herders and Hutu farmers in Masisi and Rutshuru.

¶11. (SBU) The CAE leadership claimed that it wanted to overcome "deep-rooted hostilities between Hutus and Tutsis," adding that the majority of the region's political and social leaders do not represent their communities well. The group claimed many Tutsi members view the organization as a possible counter-weight to what they perceive as Rwanda-imposed personnel and policies within the CNDP. The CAE contacts admitted, however, that some CNDP remained suspicious of the group's Hutu roots. Former North Kivu Governor Eugene Serufuli has met with the group, but he is apparently focused on reviving his own "NGO," Tous Pour la Paix et le Developpement-TPD.

¶12. (SBU) Comment: While the CAE could become a useful vehicle for Hutu-Tutsi reconciliation, it could also become a means to promote "Hutu power," similar to what the TPD did when Serufuli was governor. Supporters of a Rwandophone agenda may also view the organization as a way to promote their political and economic interests, and possibly to lock out non-Rwandophones from the provinces' power structures. End comment.

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